

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please add Claims 26-31, to read as follows.

1. (Previously Presented) A speech signal processing apparatus comprising:
distortion obtaining means for obtaining a respective modification distortion
for each of a plurality of synthesis units, each respective modification distortion being a
distortion between a respective unmodified individual synthesis unit and the individual synthesis
unit after modification;
selection means for selecting synthesis units based on the modification
distortion obtained by said distortion obtaining means; and
speech synthesis means for performing speech synthesis based on the synthesis
units selected by said selection means.

2-5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said
distortion obtaining means uses a value obtained by adding the obtained modification distortion
and a concatenation distortion generated by concatenating a synthesis unit to another synthesis
unit.

7. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said distortion obtaining means calculates a weighted sum of the obtained modification distortion and a concatenation distortion generated by concatenating a synthesis unit to another synthesis unit.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said distortion obtaining means calculates the modification distortion using a cepstrum distance.

10. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said distortion obtaining means includes a table storing distortions, and determines the modification distortion by referring to the table.

11. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said distortion obtaining means includes a table storing concatenation distortions, and determines a concatenation distortion by referring to the table.

12. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising:

input means for inputting text data;

language analysis means for performing language analysis of the text data; and

prosody-parameter generation means for generating predetermined prosody parameters based on a result of analysis of said language analysis means,

wherein said distortion obtaining means obtains the modification distortion based on the predetermined prosody parameters generated by said prosody-parameter generation means.

13. (Previously Presented) A speech signal processing method comprising:
a distortion obtaining step of obtaining a respective modification distortion for each of a plurality of synthesis units, each respective modification distortion being a distortion between a respective unmodified individual synthesis unit and the individual synthesis unit after modification;

a selection step of selecting synthesis units based on the modification distortion obtained in said distortion obtaining step; and

a speech synthesis step of performing speech synthesis based on the synthesis units selected in said selection step.

14-17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 13, wherein in said distortion obtaining step, a value is obtained by adding the obtained modification distortion and a concatenation distortion generated by concatenating a synthesis unit to another synthesis unit.

19. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 13, wherein in said distortion obtaining step, a weighted sum is calculated of the obtained modification distortion and a concatenation distortion generated by concatenating a synthesis unit to another synthesis unit.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 13, wherein in said distortion obtaining step, the modification distortion is calculated using a cepstrum distance.

22. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 13, wherein in said distortion obtaining step, a table storing distortions is provided, and the modification distortion is determined by referring to the table.

23. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 13, wherein in said distortion obtaining step, a table storing concatenation distortions is provided, and a concatenation distortion is determined by referring to the table.

24. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 13, further comprising:
an input step of inputting text data;
a language analysis step of performing language analysis of the text data; and

a prosody-parameter generation step of generating predetermined prosody parameters based on a result of analysis in said language analysis step,

wherein in said distortion obtaining step, the modification distortion is obtained based on the predetermined prosody parameters generated in said prosody-parameter generation step.

25. (Currently Amended) A storage medium, capable of being read by a computer, storing a program for executing a speech signal processing method, ~~according to any one of Claims 13, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, and 24~~ the program comprising code for performing the following steps:

a distortion obtaining step of obtaining a respective modification distortion for each of a plurality of synthesis units, each respective modification distortion being a distortion between a respective unmodified individual synthesis unit and the individual synthesis unit after modification;

a selection step of selecting synthesis units based on the modification distortion obtained in the distortion obtaining step; and

a speech synthesis step of performing speech synthesis based on the synthesis units selected in the selection step.

26. (New) A storage medium according to Claim 25, wherein in the distortion obtaining step, a value is obtained by adding the obtained modification distortion and a concatenation distortion generated by concatenating a synthesis unit to another synthesis unit.

27. (New) A storage medium according to Claim 25, wherein in the distortion obtaining step, a weighted sum is calculated of the obtained modification distortion and a concatenation distortion generated by concatenating a synthesis unit to another synthesis unit.

28. (New) A storage medium according to Claim 25, wherein in the distortion obtaining step, the modification distortion is calculated using a cepstrum distance.

29. (New) A storage medium according to Claim 25, wherein in the distortion obtaining step, a table storing distortions is provided, and the modification distortion is determined by referring to the table.

30. (New) A storage medium according to Claim 25, wherein in the distortion obtaining step, a table storing concatenation distortions is provided, and a concatenation distortion is determined by referring to the table.

31. (New) A storage medium according to Claim 25, wherein the program for executing the speech signal processing method further comprises:

program code for performing an input step of inputting text data;

program code for performing a language analysis step of performing language analysis of the text data; and

program code for performing a prosody-parameter generation step of generating predetermined prosody parameters based on a result of analysis in the language analysis step,

wherein in the distortion obtaining step, the modification distortion is obtained based on the predetermined prosody parameters generated in the prosody-parameter generation step.